(b) Theoretically, calorific value of 1000 M3 o gas equals that of two tonnes of coal of grade D which is commonly used for power generation. However, gas has a higher thermal efficiency than coal.

(c) With effect from 23-12-87, the pit-head sale price of grade D steam coal having useful heat value of 4200 to 4940 K. Cal/Kg. is Rs. 232/- per tonne. This is exclusive of royalty, cess, taxes, excise duty, sales tax etc.

With effect from 31-1-87, the price of on-shore gas and off-shore gas at landfall point has been fixed at Rs. 1400/1000 M3; whereas in the North-Eastern Region the price would be Rs. 1000/- 1000 M3, with a discount of upto Rs. 500/1000 M3. The price of gas from the HBJ pipeline has been fixed at Rs. 2250/1090 M3. These prices are exclusive of royalty, taxes etc.

(d) The prices fixed by the Government for natural gas is related to a range of calorific values. Generation of power from gas is more economical than coal, as gas based power plants have shorter gestation period and lower capital and operation costs.

(e) Natural gas is utilised whenever it is found to be techno-economically viable. Prices are charged at rates fixed by Government.

Second digital electronic factory in Bangalore

2645. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the proposal for setting up the second digital electronic switching factory in Bangalore is now virtually in cold storage;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government still propose to set up the factory keeping in view of the interests of workers; and

(d) if so, by when the factory is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) to (d) A second factory to produce five lakhs lines a year of digital electronic switching equipment was proposed to be set up at Bangalore during the 7th Plan period. This was proposed in the context of a proposed investment of Rs. 13,000 crores in the telecommunications network.

The final plan utlay was however fixed at Rs. 4010 crores only. In this background, it was found that the factory may not be needed during the 7th Plan period. Since then, the Department's allocations have been increased modestly in the Annual Plans and it has now been possible to set up the factory in a phased manner. The production of one lakh lines a year of C-DOT design of Rural Automatic Exchanges has been taken up. The production has commenced. This is to be followed by production of one lakh lines a year of 512-port main exchanges.

It will thus be seen that the proposal is not in cold storage but is in fact being pursued actively.

Use of Hazardous non-pesticide chemicals

2646. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of hazrdous non-pesticide chemicals are in use in India which have been banned in the technologically advanced countries,

(b) whether Government propose to formulate a time bound programme to stop the use of such chemicals in India; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Government is not aware of use of any such chemicals in India.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Funds for Neyveli Lignite Corporation projects

2647. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a few projects of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation are not being implemented due to the delay in sanctioning of funds by the Centre;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some vested interests are creating hurdles in sanctioning funds for the fourth unit of N.L.C. which was submitted to the Centre in February, 1987; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COAL IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI C. K. JAFFAR SHARIFF): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Shortage of raw material for Small Scale Industries in Madurai

2648. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that about 3900 registered small scale Industries in Madurai and other Districts of Tamil Nadu are struggling for survival, due to non-availability of raw materials, such as Steel, Plastic and Coal; and

(b) what measures are taken by the Centre to help to solve the existing problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) The indigenous availability of certain steel items like thinner gauge HR and CR sheets and plastic raw materials like LDPE, HDRE, PVC, PP: PS etc. has not been adequate to meet the full requirements of the industrial units during the current year.

(b) To tide over the problem of the State of Tamil Nadu, an allocation of 1000 tonnes of HR coils has been made in favour of Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation (TNSIDCO). The Corporation has also been allowed to import 600 tonnes of CR sheets during the current year.

To augment the indigenous supply of plastic raw materials, the import of all major thermo plastic raw materials has been allowed under OGL and these imports are made cheaper by the reduction of custom duty on these materials.

Missing pipes belonging to ONGC

2649. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that pipes worth Rs. 30 lakhs belonging to the Oil and Natural Gas Commission were found missing in the Puzhal near Red Hills in Tamil Nadu.;

(b) if so, what action has been taken by Government; and

(c) who has been found responsible for this and what are the other details in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM): (a) Yes, Sir.